

REMARKS

This is a complete response to the outstanding Office Action mailed May 18, 2006. Claims 4-6 have been amended and claims 7-19 have been added herein. Support for new claims 7-19 may be found in original claims 1-6. No new matter has been added. Upon entry of the enclosed claim amendments, claims 1-19 remain pending in the present application.

I. Response to Drawing Objections

Applicant has amended Figures 4A and 4B to be designated by a legend as "Prior Art". The amendments to the drawings herein overcome the objections set forth by the Examiner.

II. Response to Claim Objections and Rejection -35 USC § 112

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's comprehensive review of the claims. Applicant has amended the claims to overcome the objections of the claims 1-6 as suggested by the Examiner in sections 2 and 3 of the Office Action.

Claims 4-6 have been amended to correct all multiple dependent claims from depending from another multiple dependent claim. Claims 7-15 have been added herein and support for claims 7-15 may be found in original claims 1 - 6.

Laser beam welding, known to an individual skilled in the art at the time of the invention, is a technique that is used join multiple pieces of metal through the use of a laser providing a concentrated heat source which may provide for narrow, deep welds and high welding rates. The process is often used in application requiring precision, speed and high volumes, for example, the automotive industry. The term "welding corresponding to a laser weld" is specific and distinctly claims the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In view of ordinary meaning and the specification, "the welding path being turned back" does specifically and distinctly claims the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant discloses, for example, a semicircular arc with turning parts labeled as 18a and 18c. Applicant's claim language is not limited to a semicircular arc but may be a variety of paths that allow for the termination point to reside away from a point of stress due to external forces.

In view of ordinary meaning and the specification, the term "the external forces" does specifically and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant discloses an exemplary external force in figure 1 as indicated by the arrows. Based on Applicant's disclosure it is apparent by one skilled in the art that the external forces inducing stress at the point of weld may be accomplished by a variety of forces at various locations on either the attaching member or mother member. Applicant's claimed invention may use a variety of paths that allow for the termination point to reside away from a point of stress due to a variety of external forces.

Although portion of the claims 1-6 may include narrative language. The claim language does specifically and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

III. Response to Claim Rejections Based on Obviousness

In the Office Action, claims 1-4 have been preliminarily rejected as obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Specifically claims 1-4 have been preliminarily rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 by reference JP401321084A in view of Applicant's background information.

Applicant's claim 1 recites, "the welding termination point being located at a place where no stress concentration occurs due to external forces on the mother member and the attaching member."

Neither Applicant's background information nor JP401321084A disclose, teach, or suggest this element of the claimed invention.

Applicant discloses an exemplary embodiment of this element in paragraphs 0024-0026 and figure 1 of the original specification. Applicant background information discloses the welding termination point being located at a point where stress due to an external force is concentrated opposite from what is disclosed by

Applicant's claimed invention. JP401321084A also does not disclose, teach, or suggest this element of claim 1. Therefore, for at least these reasons claim 1 overcomes the above 103 rejection. The Applicant also respectfully submits that since claims 2-15 depend on independent claim 1, claims 2-15 contain all limitations of independent claim 1. Since independent claim 1 should be allowed, as argued herein, pending dependent claims 2-158 should be allowed as a matter of law for at least this reason. In re Fine, 5 U.S.P.Q.2d 1596, 1608 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

III. Prior Art Made of Record

The prior art made of record has been considered, but is not believed to affect the patentability of the presently pending claims.

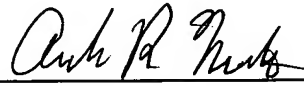
CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments and comments and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that all objections and rejections have been traversed, rendered moot and/or accommodated, and that presently pending claims 1-19 are in condition for allowance. Applicant has responded to all of the Examiner's requests. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and the presently pending claims are hereby courteously requested. The examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

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Respectfully submitted,

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